

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00  
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-07  
IO-13 /072 W  
-----161831Z 022662 /43

O R 161435Z MAY 77  
FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1682  
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMCONSUL OPORTO  
COMUSFORAZ  
USCINCEUR  
VCINCLANT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PONTA DELGADA 0171

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, PO  
SUBJ: FLA VIOLENCE MARS LOCAL HOLIDAY

1. MAY 15 AT ABOUT 11 P.M. IN PONTA DELGADA A SCUFFLE BROKE OUT BETWEEN ELEMENTS OF FLA AND THE POLICE (PSP) OVER THE RAISING OF THE AZOREAN FLAG IN A PUBLIC SQUARE. THE DISTURBANCE MOVED TO THE POLICE HEADQUARTERS A FEW BLOCKS AWAY WHERE ONE INDIVIDUAL, LONG ASSOCIATED WITH FLA, FIRED A PISTOL WOUNDING FOUR POLICEMEN AND ONE AZOREAN IMMIGRANT LIVING IN CANADA. SEVERAL OTHERS WERE INJURED BY ROCKS. THE POLICE DISBURSED THE CROWD IN FRONT OF THE POLICE HEADQUARTERS WITH TEAR GAS AFTER A NUMBER OF WINDOWS HAD BEEN BROKEN. ACCORDING TO POLICE SOURCES, TWO POLICEMEN AND THE IMMIGRANT ARE STILL HOSPITALIZED AND THE MAN WHO SHOT THEM IN JAIL. THE POLICE BELIEVE ALL THE SHOTS WERE FIRED BY THIS ONE MAN WITH A PISTOL.

2. COMMENT: THIS INCIDENT AROSE OVER THE DISPLAY OF THE AZOREAN  
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FLAG DURING THE MOST IMPORTANT LOCAL HOLIDAY, SANTO CRISTO. FOR THIS ESSENTIALLY RELIGIOUS OCCASION, WHICH ATTRACTS HUNDREDS OF VISITORS, THE CITY OF PONTA DELGADA IS DECORATED WITH LIGHTS AND FLAGS. THIS YEAR THE RED AND GREEN FLAGS OF PORTUGAL WERE VERY PROMINENT, AND ACCORDING TO RUMORS, ORDERED BY PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES. MANY THOUGHT THE BLUE AND WHITE OF THE AZOREAN FLAG SHOULD ALSO BE DISPLAYED AND THE AZOREAN FLAGS WERE RAISED

ALONG SIDE THE PORTUGUESE IN THE MAIN SQUARE AND FLEW THERE FOR SEVERAL DAYS. THE NIGHT OF MAY 14, THE ARMY WITH THE HELP OF THE POLICE (PSP) REMOVED THE AZOREAN FLAGS FROM THE SQUARE. THE FOLLOWING NIGHT (MAY 15) FLA SUPPORTERS WERE ATTEMPTING TO REPLACE THE AZOREAN FLAG WHEN POLICE INTERFERENCE LED TO THE VIOLENCE.

3. THE AZOREAN FLAG, WHICH ORIGINATED IN THE 1890'S IS A LEGAL FLAG WHICH REPRESENTS AZOREAN AUTONOMY, BUT IS ALSO USED AS A SYMBOL OF INDEPENDENCE. A YEAR AND A HALF AGO THERE WAS ANOTHER INCIDENT INVOLVING TROOPS REMOVING THE FLAG. SINCE THAT TIME THE FLAG HAS FLOWN CONTINUOUSLY IN VARIOUS LOCALES WITHOUT CAUSING ANY PROBLEMS. THE ARMY AND POLICE WERE APPARENTLY ORDERED TO REMOVE THE FLAGS BECAUSE THEY WERE FLYING IN A PUBLIC SQUARE INSTEAD OF ON PRIVATE PROPERTY. MILITARY AUTHORITIES, WHO ARE NEW SINCE THE FLAG QUESTION FIRST AROSE, SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT FLA WOULD NOT HAVE IGNORED THE REMOVAL OF THE FLAGS. MOST AZOREANS ARE PROUD OF THEIR FLAG AND SEE NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD NOT BE DISPLAYED. MANY HERE WILL CONDEMN THE ARMY AND POLICE FOR REMOVING THE FLAGS BUT THEY WILL ALSO CONDEMN THE SHOOTINGS AND THE VIOLENCE. THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THERE WAS ANYTHING MORE BEHIND THE INCIDENT THAN THE FLAG QUESTION.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CIVIL DISORDERS, HOLIDAYS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977PONTA00171  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** FLA VIOLENCE MARS LOCAL HOLIDAY  
**TAGS:** PINT, PO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009